

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT

Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity are immediate and necessary objectives of the Department of Consumer Protection.

Affirmative Action requires more than ensuring employment neutrality with regard to protected group membership. It requires that every good faith effort be undertaken to recruit, employ and promote qualified members of protected groups formerly excluded or underutilized in the work force. Unless positive action is undertaken to overcome systemic institutional forms of exclusion and discrimination, full and fair participation of all persons in the work force will not be achieved.

As the appointing authority for this agency, I am personally committed to achieving the goals within the timetables set forth in the Department's affirmative action plan. I assume ultimate responsibility for ensuring the success of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment throughout this agency.

"Affirmative Action" is positive action, undertaken with conviction and effort, to overcome the present effects of past practices, policies or barriers to equal employment opportunity and to achieve the full and fair participation of Women, Blacks and Hispanics and other protected groups found to be underutilized in the work force or affected by policies or practices having an adverse impact.

"Equal Employment Opportunity" is the employment of individuals without consideration of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, mental retardation, physical disability, learning disability, sexual orientation, past or present history of mental disability, genetic information, or criminal record, unless the provisions of Sections 46a-60(b), 46a-80(b), or 46a-81(b), of the Connecticut General Statutes are controlling or there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in one of the above groups. Equal Employment Opportunity is the purpose and goal of Affirmative Action under Sections 46a-68-31 through 46a-68-74 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

A list of all federal and state constitutional provisions, laws, regulations, guidelines and executive orders that prohibit or outlaw discrimination is attached to this policy statement.

This agency recognizes the hiring difficulties experienced by persons with disabilities and by many older persons. Program goals to overcome any present effects of past discrimination and to ensure the full and fair utilization of such persons in the work force will be set forth as is necessary.

In order to achieve parity in the work force, this agency utilizes viable affirmative action measures in all stages of the employment process. These measures include the following:

(a) The Affirmative Action Officer is advised of position vacancies and is responsible for the recruitment of individuals to fill these vacancies. This agency will continue to recruit protected group members to ensure an available applicant pool for vacancies.

(b) Job qualifications, job specifications, recruitment and personnel practices and policies are reviewed periodically to ensure artificial barriers do not exist that would exclude the appointment of protected group members.

(c) Each new employee is provided a copy of the Affirmative Action Policy Statement. A copy of the Affirmative Action Policy Statement is posted and distributed to each employee on an annual basis, and at such time as there is any revision in it.

(d) All training and career development opportunities are available by voluntary request and participation of the employees.

(e) Service ratings or employee evaluations are based on job performance. They are reviewed by the Affirmative Action Officer and signed by the employee's immediate supervisor and at least one other manager or administrator in order to ensure the absence of bias in the evaluation process.

(f) Layoffs and terminations are under the purview of State Personnel Regulations and applicable collective bargaining contracts. The Affirmative Action Officer is advised of all dismissals. This ensures that the dismissal is consistent with State Personnel Regulations and collective bargaining contract provisions, and is absent of discrimination due to protected class membership.

(g) Confidential counseling concerning affirmative action issues and career development, as well as assistance in pursuing the agency's grievance procedure is available from and provided by the Affirmative Action Officer.

The Department of Consumer Protection pledges that it will affirmatively provide its services and programs in a fair and impartial manner. This agency and its facilities shall not be used in the furtherance of any discriminatory practice nor shall this agency become party to any agreement, arrangement, contract or plan which has the effect of sanctioning discriminatory practices.

This agency will not condone or tolerate any behavior or activity that results in or has the effect of perpetuating stereotypes, prejudices or discrimination of any kind against any person. The agency will take immediate and appropriate action to ensure full compliance with this policy.

Each employee has a right to review and comment on the affirmative action plan at any time. All responses or concerns should be addressed to: Alicia Nunez, Affirmative Action Officer, Department of Administrative Services, 165 Capitol Avenue, State Office Building 5th Floor East, Hartford, CT 06106, telephone at (860) 713-5317, e-mail at alicia.nunez@CT.GOV.

This policy supersedes previous policies. Each employee of this agency is expected to review this policy and be familiar with it. More importantly, however, it is the responsibility of each and every employee to adhere to the Affirmative Action goals of this agency. Each employee is accountable for his or her participation and enforcement of the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity within their division, and to commit himself/herself to its ideals and objectives as I have done.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Edwin R. Rodriguez", followed by a vertical red line.

Edwin R. Rodriguez
Commissioner of Consumer Protection

Date: 2/24/2006